(a) whether it is a fact that DCGI has made a complaint to the erstwhile Minister over the excessive interference by DG in drug control matters; and

(b) the action being taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Contamination of vegetables

4521. DR. ABRAR AHMED :
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA :
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM :
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether water contamination has led to high levels of lead, copper and zinc in vegetables grown and sold in Delhi and some other parts of the country;

(b) whether such vegetables are injurious to public health ; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to check the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) A study was carried out at Delhi and Varanasi by Imperial College, London in partnership with (i) Shrshti, Delhi University; (ii) Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; (iii) Development Tracks, New Delhi and (iv) Indian Agriculture Research Institute to assess the level of heavy metals in vegetables and to develop simple techniques, which could reduce heavy metal from these vegetables.

The studies revealed that vegetables crop are often grown in polluted and degraded environmental condition in the urban fringe zone and are subject to further pollution from vehicles and industries during marketing.

The outcome of the studies in brief are as follows :

"Fresh vegetables samples of cauliflower, okra, spinach were found to contain heavy metals higher than the permissible limits, as defined by PFA Act, 1954."

A proportion of heavy metals in spinach samples were present on the surface of the leaves. After one washing 20 per cent contamination is reduced and aftersecond wash, it is reduced by approximately 50 per cent.

(b) and (c) Regular intake of higher amount of metals in diet are injurious to health. There is a need to educate the farmers to adopt Good Agricultural Practices for production of crops including integrated pest management.

Shortage of anaesthetists in Government hospitals

4522. SHRI R. KAMARAJ :
SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA :

Will theMinister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the shortage of anaesthetists in Government hospitals, especially in rural areas is responsible for a large number of maternal deaths;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that due to lack of future prospects, incumbents do not choose this line as their career;

(d) if so, the details of the efforts made by Government to make this profession lucrative in view of the future requirements; and

(e) the action taken by Government to appoint more anaesthetists in Government hospitals especially in rural areas to save the life of poor people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) and (b) The complications associated with pregnancy and childbirth are not always predictable and in many cases immediate treatment of pregnant women at adequately equipped and staffed referral centres/ hospitals becomes necessary to save her life. One of the major problems being faced in provision of emergency obstetric care in rural areas has been the non-availability of post of specialist in Anaesthesia at the Community Health Centres (CHCs) level. CHCs have sanctioned post of only four other specialists such as General Medicine, paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecologist.

(c) to (e) As per available information, the post-graduate seats in the speciality of anaesthesia are readily taken up by the under-graduate doctors. However, keeping the need for doctors trained in anaesthesia for provision of emergency obstetric care in view, the following initiatives have been taken as part of the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme :

(i) The States have been asked to increase the number of seats in Diploma course for Anaesthesia in consultation with Medical Council of India (MCI). Funds for this have been committed by Government of India.

(ii) To tide over the immediate needs, States have been permitted to engage the anaesthetists from the private sector on a payment of